

HOME SELLING

Home staging hits the Cape

Home staging is a relatively new trend, but it has begun to take a foothold on the Cape, where real estate is a profession for many and a hobby for many more. We have profiled a few of the firms on Cape Cod exploring this new field.



JULIA CUMES

Nuances Falmouth Kate Stenson-Lunt

Nuances is an old-timer in the business at three years old. But their new home in a Falmouth industrial park, with a front facing Route 28, allows them the best of all worlds to grow. Owner Kate Stenson-Lunt has an inviting office space to meet

with clients and a warehouse full of furnishings and accessories in the back with truck access. She added an associate this year, and has staged about 10 empty homes in the \$1.5 million-plus market. “Six sold, two are under agreement, and two have still not sold,” said Stenson-Lunt.

“Staging a home doesn’t guarantee a buyer, it gives a better showing. The average buyer spends five to seven minutes in an empty home and 25 minutes in a staged home,” said Stenson-Lunt.

Staging a home that is occupied has its own set of complications. Packing up the clutter may make the house more presentable, but the sellers also have to live in the decluttered space. “I tell them, would you rather be inconvenienced for a few months, or have showings go on for a year?” said Stenson-Lunt. In addition, many homeowners are attached to their

personal possessions and proud of their taste. When the home stager says it all has to go, feelings could be hurt. “I tell them, ‘Let’s pack these away safely because I know they are precious to you.’”

Nuances has advertised in local newspapers and had the luck to be found online when Good Morning America was doing a segment on home staging. For 2007 they are embarking on a new marketing campaign including radio and TV ads. Stenson-Lunt added, “One of my best marketing tools is this bag I carry with me everywhere.” She held up a black tote bag covered on both sides with before-and-after pictures. She got the tote bag from the Staged Home, the national certification organization. People stop her all the time to ask about the photos and what she does.